

ester township at eight dollars per acre, paying cash for one-fourth of the amount, and giving notes for the balance. This was all uncleared land, with the exception of about fifteen acres, which could be called tillable. In about six years from that time seven acres were added, making a total of 107 acres, which is now the homestead of his widow, all being accumulated by their joint efforts.

On April 13, 1844, Mr. Cummings was married, in Sullivan (then Lorain, now Ashland county), to Miss Elizabeth Close, daughter of Benjamin and Elizabeth (Gale) Close, who were the parents of sixteen children, as follows: Miranda, Alonson, Deborah Ann, one that died in infancy, Alvira, Nathaniel, Rebecca, Amy, Elizabeth, Samuel, Lockwood, Sarah, Diana, Annis, Lucy and Reuben.

BENJAMIN CLOSE was born in Greenwich, Conn., a son of Benjamin Close, Sr., who was of Scotch descent, and was wounded in the Revolutionary war. These two, father and son, when the latter was about ten years old, moved to Genoa, N. Y. When grown to manhood, Benjamin, Jr., with his wife and two children, and accompanied by his elder brother, Henry, started for Ohio in June, 1817. He left his family in Painesville, and along with Henry came on to Sullivan township, then in Medina county, afterward in Lorain, now in Ashland. Of an old acquaintance living in Harrisville, thirteen miles from Sullivan, Mr. Close borrowed some corn and potatoes, and he had not a dollar to pay on his land, even his last tavern bill having to be settled in cloth Mrs. Close had made before leaving Genoa. They built the first house of logs in Sullivan township, and cut their road through the dense forest, as they moved onward with their ox-team from Harrisville to Sullivan. As soon as Mr. Close could clear a piece of land, he planted some apple seeds, thus starting an orchard, and until fruit was gathered from it the family, from the time they came into the township, eat only two apples. For tea,

medicine, etc., he had to go on foot to Elyria, twenty-five miles north, there being no road for oxen, and at that time he had no horse. On one occasion he lost his way, coming homeward, it being so cloudy he could not see the sun, and his compass he had left behind. After wandering about some time, he struck a small stream which proved to be a tributary of Black river, in what is now Rochester township, then uninhabited save by roving Indians and wild animals. On the bank of this stream he spied a wolf watching him, and then our adventurer wished he had brought his gun; but his faithful dog, that had accompanied him, "tackled" the brute, and after a desperate struggle got him by the throat, which so weakened the wolf that Mr. Close was able to give him a blow on the back with a hickory club he had cut for the purpose, and the dog then easily finished him. Mr. Close reached home at last, but not before darkness had set in.

Mr. Close succeeded eventually in paying for 200 acres of land. The home was a regular manufacturing establishment; for there was tailoring, dressmaking, millinery work and shoemaking going on nearly all the time. Wool was spun and woven, and the cloth colored, all at home; yet with all this work the family found time to close their labor on Saturday night, ready for rest on the Sabbath—sweet rest, indeed! The family library consisted of Bible, Catechism, "History of Henry Obookiah," "Life of God in the Soul of Man" (the latter volume published in England in 1620) and the "Missionary Herald," published in the interest of the missions in the Sandwich Islands. This pioneer home was always open to ministers and school teachers, of whom those in the neighborhood had much to do with the education of the large family growing to manhood and womanhood. Mr. Close was protected through many dangers by a kind Providence; at last, on August 10, 1852, when at the age of sixty-four years, he was driving a span of young horses that took fright

and ran away, throwing him from the wagon and killing him, when but a short distance from his home. His widow died in 1868.

D. S. Cummings died April 3, 1881, leaving a widow but no children, as the three born to them died young, namely: Francis E., died when five years and eight months old; one died in infancy, unnamed; and Wallace A. died at the age of five years. Mr. Cummings in his political sympathies was a Whig, afterward a Republican, and he was repeatedly called upon to fill offices of trust in his township, which he did with characteristic fidelity and acknowledged ability. In Church work he was very energetic and helpful, was a deacon in the Congregational Church many years, and took particular interest in educational work. His highly respected widow is regarded in the community as a woman of high morality, and is admired for her many virtues. At the present time she is living on the old homestead with an adopted son.

In 1848 there was a long and tedious lawsuit commenced by some Connecticut people against the farmers in the section where Mr. Cummings had settled. It appears that this tract of land was many years ago ceded to Ohio by some Connecticut people who afterward claimed to have never signed away their right and title to it. The suit was finally decided in favor of the farmers (of whom Mr. Cummings was one), but the cost of contesting it was about equivalent to paying for the land twice over, and fell the more heavily on the occupants, as the soil, being new, was yielding but a very small revenue.

In the fall of 1843 the women of Rochester formed a Temperance Society, as they found liquor was being sold in the town, doing an inestimable amount of harm. The leaders among the women were Mrs. H. M. Tracy (afterward Mrs. Cutler), now living in California, and Mrs. Mary Bell, now living in Kansas. They appointed the following named as a commit-

tee to talk to the party selling the liquor: Mrs. Orpha Conant, Mrs. Humiston and Mrs. Lucretia Stevens. The liquor dealer promised to stop the sale, but nevertheless continued the traffic, though more cautiously, and the women then took the case before the county court, where the man was fined ten dollars and costs. In 1844 Mrs. Tracy edited a paper called *The Palladium*, the temperance meetings being continued, and this lady also delivered some good temperance lectures. Some of the *best* citizens came with their wives to hear her, and soon afterward she was invited to deliver the lectures in public. Thus meetings continued for two or three years. Mrs. Tracy left the town, however, for more extended work, and Miss Anvilla Humiston then edited *The Palladium*, and Mrs. Eliza Conant became president. Later Miss Humiston also left town for another field of usefulness, after which Mrs. E. C. Cummings edited *The Palladium*. The meetings still continued till public sentiment was sufficiently aroused to induce those *best* men to encourage the women in the good work. The liquor element succumbed, and as a natural result the morals and status of the community greatly improved. As far as known, this was the first Woman's Temperance Society formed in the State of Ohio.

JOHN I. MASTEN (deceased), who in his lifetime was one of the most industrious and deservedly successful agriculturists of Rochester township, was a native of New York State, born March 8, 1812, in Dutchess county, a son of James Masten.

Our subject received a liberal education, for his early time, at the subscription schools of the vicinity of his native place. He was reared to farm work, and being a natural mechanic was capable of following the trades of turner and shoemaker. On